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ABSTRACT

The initiative and activities carried out by 29 countries in Latin and South America and the Caribbean in the UNESCO Major Project in the Field of Education to correct deficiencies and meet unsatisfied basic educational needs are summarized. Many summaries reflect revisions made during 1983 in National Plans of Action with respect to enhancing their effectiveness in strategy, offers and requirements of co-operation, and in the identification and establishment or reinforcement of national mechanisms. The countries reporting are Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Grenada, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Mexico, Montserrat, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, St. Kitts-Nevis, St. Lucia, Trinidad and Tobago, Uruguay, and Venezuela. Purposes, conclusions, and suggestions resulting from 13 regional and subregional technical meetings held during 1983 on matters relating to the objectives of the Major Project are also summarized. Subjects addressed at these meetings include physical education and sports as factors in the quality of education, educational planning and administration, school buildings, adult education and literacy, family health and education, inequities faced by young people and women in education, evaluation of adult education programs, and support for popular education and literacy in Bolivia. (NEC)

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BULLETIN

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The Major Project in the Field of Education in Latin America and the Caribbean has resulted from a consensus on the part of government representatives of the countries of the region concerning the necessity for a renewed, intensive and sustained effort to make good deficiencies and to meet unsatisfied basic educational needs between now and the year 2000, as a prerequisite for the development of those countries in line with objectives shared by all. In carrying out the necessary activities, each country's own efforts are to be seconded by inter-country, subregional, regional and international co-operation.

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THE MAJOR PROJECT IN THE FIELD OF EDUCATION

In The Latin American and Caribbean Region

BULLETIN 4

Santiago, Chile, November 1983

PRESENTATION

In the previous issue of this Bulletin of the UNESCO Regional Office for Education in Latin America and the Caribbean –OREALC– in support of the Major Project in the Field of Education, mention was made that precise terms of reference would be made available as from the beginning of 1983 for application in both the National Plans of Action and the Regional Plan of Action, the former referring to the individual countries concerned and the latter to the region as a whole.

In this context the National Plans of Action were revised during the year 1983 with a view to enhancing their effectiveness in respect of strategies, offers and requirements of co-operation, and in the identification and establishment or reinforcement of national mechanisms, all with a view to their implementation during the four-year period (1983-1986) adopted as the first phase of execution of the Major Project.

Regional and sub-regional meetings have also been held as from the first quarter of 1983, of which those corresponding to the Central American and Caribbean areas and the Andean sub-region deserve particular mention. CREALC collaborated in the holding of these meetings and others carried out at the national level and in the preparation of documents for possible use in the drawing up of national inventories of public and private programmes and projects in order further to perfect the National Plans of Action and the programmes to be undertaken in their initial phase of execution.

As from the present issue the greater part of the contents of this Bulletin will be devoted to presenting brief summaries of some of the more significant activities carried out by each of the countries involved within the framework of their respective National Plans of Action though without disregarding the regional and sub-regional concerns of the Project.

SOME ACTIVITIES RELATING TO THE MAJOR PROJECT CARRIED OUT IN INDIVIDUAL COUNTRIES

ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA

The main objective of the National Plan of Action is to expand educational services with a view to including the group of children of school age not currently served by the system, in particular those living in isolated or distant locations and in communities clearly suffering from social or economic deprivation. Attention is also beginning to be given to groups of children of pre-school age.

In pursuance of the second Major Project objective the Government is co-ordinating the efforts and activities of public and private entities engaged in post-literacy programmes. These include training and primary education courses for young people and adults.

With the aim of achieving qualitative educational improvements, study programmes are being reviewed in order to provide diversified opportunities to all students; teacher training programmes are in process of execution in all specialities and at all levels; progressive improvements are being made in physical school installations including laboratories; and some structural and procedural aspects of school administration are being re-examined.

ARGENTINA

A clear resolve has been expressed by this country to co-operate fully in the aims of the Major Project.

The possibility is being considered of instituting reforms designed to attain optimum levels in the general coverage of the system and in particular in the fulfilment of the compulsory 7-year education period. Although the country's overall rate of school attendance by school-age children amounts to 87.7%, some problems of low student retention remain in the North-Eastern and North-Western zones. These are being tackled by making maximum use of the resources available.

Efforts are also being made to reduce to the greatest extent possible the illiteracy rates in backward areas (such as the 21% level in the Chaco province). At the same time, educational resources are being mobilized in other parts of the country in order to combat semi-illiteracy.

An aspect to which preferential attention has begun to be devoted is that relating to education in underprivileged urban settlements.

In this context the Ministry of Education, acting through the medium of the "Dirección Nacional de Investigación, Experimentación y Perfeccionamiento Educativo —DIEPE—" and in collaboration with the Unesco Regional Office for Education in Latin America and the Caribbean —OREALC— held a Seminar-workshop in the city of Buenos Aires from 1 to 12 August 1983 on Policies and Socio-educational Programming in Underprivileged Urban Zones in order to analyse the social and educational conditions in those zones and the necessary strategies to meet their needs.

This event adopted as an empirical reference area one of the political-administrative sub-divisions of Buenos Aires, namely the district of Florencio Varela. Nevertheless, in considering the various problems and outlining action programmes care was taken throughout to ensure that the latter be similarly appropriate in other under-privileged urban districts.

The participants examined a number of intervening social factors (the labour market, basic and environmental sanitary conditions, school health, food and nutrition, mother and child care, out-of-school activities, early learning stimulation, local community organizations). This exercise led to the formulation of a set of projects designed to link the school with local community affairs.

Other regional and national projects which are contributing to the attainment of Major Project objectives are also in process of execution. Some of these are receiving the support of the Organization of American States, as follows: a) the Multinational Integrated Educational Development Project in Border Areas (Argentina, Bolivia and Paraguay) which, among other objectives, aims to benefit rural fringe settlements including indigenous population groups; b) the Multinational Project for Improvement in the Teaching of Sciences, and c) the Multinational Project for the Improvement of Basic Level Student Retention in Latin America.

BOLIVIA

When formulating the corresponding National Plan of Action the Ministry of Education and Culture adopted for priority attention the fields of popular education and literacy, pointing out the consistency of this decision with the aims of the Major Project. With this in view, Supreme Decree Nº 19453 was enacted on 14 March 1983 giving approval to the "Profesor Elizardo Pérez" National Literacy and Popular Education Plan and instituting its immediate application throughout the Republic.

Under the provisions of this decree a National Popular Literacy Council was constituted, it was resolved that the stage of preparation should commence on 9 April 1983, and 1984 was adopted as "The Year of National Literacy".

The Plan aims to achieve popular participation in the democratic process, to promote social mobility and intercultural dialogue, and foster understanding of the profound changes taking place in the country.

The goal is to make literate one million persons living in fringe urban districts and rural areas by means of activities characterized by broad popular involvement at all levels and by the incorporation of all sectors, institutions and organizations throughout the country.

The programme aims to apply an out-of-school approach and decentralization strategies technically operative in character combined with intersectoral and bilingual integration, to link the literacy process with productive work. It also aims to generate reflective and critical social awareness for better individual development in the context of local and national realities and in response to situations of structural change and social and institutional mobilization. With this in mind the contents of the literacy pamphlets in use will be devoted to production, food, health and education for democracy. Intensive employment will also be made of the social communications media, making use of mother tongues as well as monolingual and bilingual material.

During the execution stage of the programme, classes will be discontinued between January and July 1984 at teachers' colleges and universities throughout the country, at secondary school level in urban areas and at all rural teaching establishments.

With the technical and financial support of OREALC, the "Servicio Nacional de Alfabetización y Educación Popular (SENALEP)" has carried out the following activities: a) National Seminar on Methodology in Literacy Teaching held at Sucre (Chuquisaca) from 11 to 15 July 1983. The purpose of this meeting was to define, in consultation with specialized institutions and popular organizations, the methodology to be applied in carrying out the plan; b) National Seminar on Literacy and Intercultural and Bilingual Education, held at Cochabamba, 8 to 12 August 1983, for the purpose of adopting decisions regarding the characteristics of the plan in response to the pluricultural and linguistic conditions prevailing in Bolivia, c) National Seminar on Contents of the Pamphlet and other media to be used in the plan. La Paz, 18-23 September 1983.

Events of some national significance at the Cochabamba Seminar were the obtainment of unified alphabets for the Aymara and Quechua languages and endorsement of a proposal to seek official national status to these languages.

BRAZIL

The National Plan of Action is fully consistent with the directives, priorities and strategies defined in the policies of the educational sector. The Sectoral Education Plan establishes as the main lines of action in a national context: education in rural areas, education in peripheral urban districts, cultural development, and the enhancement of human resources and participatory planning.

With regard to the first objective of the Major Project, the Plan attaches first importance to basic and out-of-school education, including the pre-school stage. Together with activities devoted to improving teacher performance, the curriculum, instructional materials and physical structures, it points to the need to develop lines of action in the field of student health and nutrition and socio-cultural community conditions.

Aims for 1982-1983 include the expansion of educational opportunities, an increase and improvement in school physical facilities and supplementary teaching centres and classrooms, including the serving of 35 million snacks daily and provision of light meals to approximately

23 million students in the pre-school and basic levels.

Insofar as preprimary education is concerned the Ministry of Education and Culture has established as a matter of priority the teaching of children of 4 to 6 years of age of lower income families and others in precarious social and health conditions. For this purpose it is intended to enlarge physical premises, train staff, increase the number of programmes, encourage community activities, and create new pre-school facilities —"Núcleos de Educación Preescolar (NEPE)" and "Grupos de Atención al Preescolar (CAPE)", etc.

In the supplementary adolescent and adult teaching field it is sought to expand educational opportunities in favour of the more disadvantaged urban and rural areas. Deserving mention in this respect are the programmes of Functional Literacy, Integrated Education, Self-Teaching, Worker Education and Formal Training.

In order to improve the quality and efficiency of the system, numerous projects and programmes are in progress, many being devoted to the development of basic education. Examples in this direction are the encouragement being given to programmes of community participation in the education process; teacher-training, especially of those serving at schools in disadvantaged urban districts and rural areas; support to the establishment —with University participation— of optional study programmes; technological support to education; the promotion of educational research and stimulation of the use of bibliographic resources.

CHILE

Three projects fully consistent in their objectives with those of the Major Project are currently in execution. One of these, described as "The education of small children — a shared responsibility" is being carried out with technical co-operation of the Organization of American States (OAS) and forms part of an extensive programme of "integral education in the more disadvantaged rural zones" of Region VIII where a large proportion of the country's indigenous rural population is to be found.

The fundamental objective is to assist families in these communities in the education of their children up to 6 years of age. A study of 200 families was carried out in 1982 and the programme "Know your child", prepared by the research centre "Centro de Perfeccionamiento, Experimentación e Investigaciones Pedagógicas (CPEIP)" was applied to 98 families. 15 young people were trained to attend to children under 6 years of age at the open centres.

In a parallel exercise it has been possible as part of the project to undertake technical co-operation activities with officials of the Paraguayan Ministry of Education and Culture, and in 1983 it is planned to offer five 15-day tutorships to professionally-qualified representatives from other countries of the region.

Another of the projects referred to is that for teacher-training development, "Desarrollo de Sistemas Nacionales de Capacitación Docente (PROMULCAD)", sponsored by the OAS and multinational in character. Application of a decentralized teacher improvement system was tested in 1982 in one of the country's administrative regions. In 1983 it has been preferentially devoted to solving the question as to "how to improve the performance of the educational unit (school)".

The third project, which is consistent with the Major Project objective to improve the quality of education, is the "Student Garden" programme based on national experiments carried out in the 1960s. This programme has been gradually extended to embrace more than 1,000 basic rural schools and has benefitted from the assistance, advice and co-operation of the Ministries of Education and Home Affairs, the American Foreign Aid Cooperative (CARE), the "Instituto Nacional de Desarrollo Agropecuario (INDAP)" and the "Servicio Nacional de Capacitación y Empleo (SENCE)".

The specific initial objectives were to achieve the qualitative improvement of general basic education imparted at rural schools, to provide scientific and technical agricultural training to children in rural areas, to link the school with the community through the application of school-acquired experience in family farm plots, and reinforce ethical, civic and social values.

As the result of an evaluation exercise carried out in 1980 the programme was transformed into a subject of the basic general education study plan under the title "School plot cultivation and technical-manual education". The

concept, now converted into a prescribed study subject, was applied in 1982 at a total of 4,951 courses from grades 3 to 8 involving 128,745 students at 1,941 schools.

The programme has also had a significant effect on community life in that it has introduced new cultivation and livestock-raising techniques in the working of family farm plots by employing non-traditional methods, making better use of local resources and improving the feeding habits of the rural population.

COLOMBIA

Approval was given in June 1982 to the Educational Promotion Plan for rural areas under the supervision of the Ministry of National Education. This plan, which reflects the principles of the Major Project and is one of the main components of the National Plan of Action, aims to improve the quality, efficiency and coverage of primary education, of the lower secondary phase of vocational education and also of adult education. It is to be progressively extended to the country's rural areas in concentrations of population not larger than 7,500 inhabitants.

It is intended to raise student promotion and retention rates, and improve the internal efficiency of the system and the quality of rural education (the suitability of plans and programmes, adaptation of educational texts and materials, and staff training). It is proposed to complete rural school services up to the fifth grade (the final primary education grade) and strengthen the system of microplanning at the nuclear district level.

The initial intention is to complete this plan over a period of ten years. During the first phase (1983-1985) 150 educational development nuclei involving approximately 2,250 schools would come into operation. The second phase would cover the period 1986 to 1988 and provide an overall coverage of 500 nuclei involving approximately 7,500 schools; and the third phase (1989-1992) would comprise 1,000 nuclei with approximately 15,000 rural schools.

This Educational Promotion Plan is financed by contributions from the National Budget (65%) and a World Bank loan (35%). From an operational point of view a characteristic feature of the plan is that it establishes a clear and well-structured articulation of the different national educational administration levels, starting from the basic operating unit and progressing upwards through local, zonal, regional and national levels. The basic operational unit is the educational nucleus composed of a variable number of schools (between 11 and 20). The nucleus and the community act in association on the Advisory Consultative Committee consisting of members of the community. A further body is the Operations Committee, composed of teachers, with duties of a technical-pedagogic character.

Acting as senior organs at progressively ascending levels are the Educational District, the Regional Directive Committee, and the National Directive Committee with a National Executive Secretariat.

The programming process is perhaps one of the more noteworthy aspects and deserves particular mention. It is based on the formulation of subprojects arising from the study of educational experiences at the local level. These lead to the drawing up of a methodological document by the technical team responsible for the academic year. A project specifies the activities to be undertaken and the services to be provided to the nuclei concerned (2 to 5).

Approval of the subprojects follows the established order of administrative seniority (district, department, nation). The National Executive Secretariat lays down the corresponding financial provisions and establishes budgetary ceilings by nucleus, district and operating year.

The relevant authorities and the communities themselves hope to overcome some remaining difficulties and invigorate the process which, as already mentioned, is devoted to the more disadvantaged rural districts which is where the greatest social and economic needs are found.

In addition, the Education Development Plan (1982-1986) includes a number of programmes and projects designed both to provide assurance to the population groups concerned with regard to equality of access and performance in the system and to achieve an improvement in the quality of education imparted.

A national instruction campaign "Campaña de Instrucción Nacional (CAMINA)" established in the interests of life long and integral education was launched by the President of the Republic on 17 September 1982. Its objectives

are: to promote a movement of national participation to ensure that all Colombian citizens have access to education; to eradicate illiteracy; to extend basic education in the less favoured sectors of the population; to direct the use of resources from public and private institutions to the execution of educational and cultural programmes; and to promote participation by the mass communication media in the educational field.

In this context CAMINA acts as a central body around which the various programmes are integrated.

COSTA RICA

Broadly speaking, the Plan of Action of the Major Project is in this instance the National Plan of Cultural and Educational Development for the forthcoming years. Together with the setting in motion of the latter, encouragement has been given to the participation of community organizations in the proposed activities. It is in fact hoped that the communities will in due course be able to generate their own educational and cultural development projects.

A National Cultural and Educational Planning Programme was set up as an instrument for the overall execution of the Plan.

In pursuance of the objective of ensuring the schooling of the school-age population, a National Programme for the Generalization of Formal Basic Education has been instituted. It consists of four component parts, namely: the adaptation of study programmes, teacher training, production and supply of technical resources, and special attention to rural and underprivileged areas.

In order to fulfil the second objective the National Programme of Integrated Adult Education was set up with the following components: literacy, accelerated basic education, worker training, and basic education maturity accreditation. A National Popular Culture Development Programme has also been set up to enable the communities to express and expand their cultural manifestations and consolidate their cultural identity through the means of festivals, handicraft promotion, etc.

In order to improve the quality and efficiency of educational methods, programmes are in process of execution for the Training of teachers, assistant teachers and cultural promoters; for Curricular Development with the aim of updating and adapting study programmes; for Supplementary Student Nourishment; for the increase and optimum utilization of physical infrastructure; and for the Regionalization of educational services in order to encourage the solution of problems on the spot.

Concurrently with the application of these programmes, activities aiming to ensure the better execution of the Plan will be encouraged and put into effect. Several of the latter are in process of implementation, including the training of staff responsible for their execution, the organization of local and regional committees, the consolidation of operating committees, and public information concerning the Major Project, evaluation seminars, etc.

CUBA

The country's education system comprises eight sub-systems: Pre-school Education, General Polytechnic and Worker Instruction, Special Education; Adult, Technical and Professional Education; Teacher Training and Improvement; Higher Education; and Out-of-School Education.

Operations are backed by a resource allocation which in 1982 amounted to 15.2% of the National Budget.

In the academic year 1982-1983, of every 100 students enrolled 53.4 are in the primary, 40.3 in the secondary and 6.3 in the higher stages of education. Schooling percentages are currently in excess of 97% in the 6-12 age group, and more than 84% in that between 13 and 16 years of age. As from the school year 1977-1978 compulsory education was raised to the 9th general basic secondary grade.

With regard to the Second Major Project objective, illiteracy was reduced to 3.9% as a result of the Literacy Campaign carried out in 1961. Subsequently, and up to the year 1980, adult education was imparted to 1,400,000 persons and contributed to raising to grade six the average level of schooling of the population. Under the Plan for 1981-1985, the country's workers are endeavouring to reach a level equivalent to grade nine.

Insofar as activities relating to the third objective of the Major Project are concerned, com-

bined-grade classes continue to be held in rural areas, especially for grades 1 to 4, and boarding facilities have been provided for children in grades five and six with the aim of ensuring an improvement in educational quality.

In the matter of curriculum trends the combination of work and study is a basic principle complied with in primary education and in the nursery schools and educational farm plots in school areas. For their part, non-boarding students attending general secondary education centres take part during an annual 45 day period in the "country school" plan. Boarding students at rural schools work for three hours daily in activities under the agro-industrial development plan.

Work continues on perfecting the system in order to raise the scientific quality of teaching and educational contents. New study plans have been introduced together with programmes, texts, methodological guide-books, teaching facilities, methods and evaluation systems. For instance, 23 million copies of study texts are printed and distributed annually.

A significant educational innovation has been the introduction of crèches where infants are received as from 45 days after birth in order to give comprehensive attention to their development and make it possible for a growing number of mothers to obtain employment and participate actively in social affairs. In 1982 more than 93,000 children were attended to at 839 centres of this kind.

In addition the school consolidation system has been fortified in the country's rural areas.

DOMINICA

The main activities in progress within the National Plan of Action are: expansion of the programme of attention to children of pre-school age, including the training of related staff; the rebuilding and fitting out of schools recently destroyed or damaged by hurricanes; the provision of teaching equipment and materials; teacher training; and the inclusion of family education in the school study programme.

The training of literacy teachers continues for literacy and post-literacy activities and life long adult education, the supervision of Adult Education Committees has been intensified, the programme of the Extra-Rural Adult Education Centre is fully under way, and financial and administrative measures are being adopted to provide vocational training for young people.

A pilot project referring to the conception, application and evaluation of educational strategies for rural development has been started with the financial and technical co-operation of Unesco.

With a view to improving the quality, efficiency and suitability of the educational system the education by radio programmes remain in force; technical efforts are being made to improve the teaching of English, and teachers' improvement activities continue. At the same time the guidance and advisory services entrusted to specially-trained classroom teachers are in process of expansion.

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

In its preliminary version edited early in 1983 the National Plan of Action singles out the schooling of the entire population between 7 and 14 years of age as one of the main goals of the education system. (In 1980, the gross schooling rate was estimated to amount to 84.6%). At the same time it is intended to reduce the student drop-out, grade repetition and over-age rates. The specific targets for the commencement of school attendance, teacher placement, and building and equipment are to be achieved gradually.

The Education Secretariat —"Secretaría de Educación, Bellas Artes y Cultos (SEEBAC)"— has outlined a strategy which includes: the professional advancement of teachers and senior personnel, community participation for effective support of the plan (co-operation in the building and equipping of premises, etc.); the preparation of out-of-school programmes to supplement regular study courses; and collaboration with other government agencies.

The adult education reinforcement project consisting of three programmes is allocated a high degree of priority in the light of the current high illiteracy rate. This project aims to raise the educational levels of the adult population (illiterates and those of a low level of instruction) with the aim of improving occupational and under-employment rates, and improving incomes and living standards.

The special education programme —"Programa Especial de Educación Ciudadana (PEEC)"

aims to impart literacy to 200,000 persons in 1983; and the purpose of the Accelerated Occupational Training Programme is to give technical farming and work training to those who have achieved literacy. Finally, the Programme of Institutional Reinforcement is devoted to expanding the physical capacity allocated to the attention of adult students (the building and equipping of Peoples' Urban Education Centres, the re-modelling of two Women's Training Schools, and the training of teaching, technical and administrative staff at the Centres and Cultural Development Schools.

Furthermore, apart from the reinforcement programme, activities continue in the National Regular Literacy Programme, training for women, accelerated primary education courses, the "Communal Farm", and the programmes of numerous public and private institutions concerned with adult education.

A "Seminar in Support of the People's Education Programme" was held from 19 to 23 August with the co-operation of OREALC. The purpose of this event was to obtain the technical support of national and international institutions in favour of the National Literacy Programme. It in fact proved to be an occasion for evaluation and reviewal on the part of the attending PEFC programme personnel and representatives of other programmes and institutions.

The Seminar acquired an international flavour when an exchange of experiences was suggested with institutions and specialists in other countries. Specific literacy activities carried out in Colombia, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua and Peru were also described and discussed.

Several concrete and significant suggestions were put forward after an on the spot examination of the virtues and shortcomings of the literacy plan and after a general discussion concerning it with a view to improving and expanding the efforts so far made to raise the level of literacy in the country.

ECUADOR

The National Development Plan establishes a close relationship between sectoral policies and the objectives and priority population groups of the Major Project. Insofar as the first objective is concerned, it is hoped to resolve in the medium term the problem of school drop-out and grade-repetition rates, giving preferential attention to rural and underprivileged urban communities. In addition, attention is being given to satisfying educational demands in the lower secondary education grades with the long-term aim of achieving an all-round basic education period of 9 years.

With regard to the second Major Project objective, priority attention is being given to literacy and adult-education programmes, with particular emphasis on rural and indigenous communities within a policy of co-ordination between the formal and non-formal sub-systems and in concordance with the conceptual framework of lifelong education. It is hoped in a five-year period to make literate some 760,000 persons of over 15 years of age.

The Quechua sub-programme conducted by the Catholic University of Quito and the Ministry of Education and Culture with the active participation of native Quechua and Chachi promoters has made significant progress and won the 1982 Noma International Literacy Award.

Various programmes have been instituted with a view to fulfilling the third objective. These include the renovation of study programmes, teacher training, and the production of instructional-support resources for the teaching-learning process. Several of these programmes are in an initial phase of application. Others should —after specific study— reach a satisfactory stage to meet the problems and needs of the priority population groups envisaged in the Major Project.

As part of the activities of the National Plan of Action changes are being introduced in the education, training and improvement of teachers. Within this line of action a Project defined as "Support to the National System of Improvement of Human Resources in the Education Sector" is in process of execution with financial assistance from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the advisory services of Unesco and is planned for completion by the end of 1984.

Also in concordance with the Major Project objectives and with the principle of ordination between work and study, a Proyect for the Improvement and Expansion of Technical Education, which includes a significant teacher-training component, is in process of execution with

financial assistance from the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and with the technical support of Unesco.

On 8 October 1983 the Ministry of Education passed a Decree (Nº 2542) giving effect to the establishment of the "Comisión Nacional Ecuatoriana del Proyecto Principal de Educación" (National Ecuadorean Committee for the Major Education Project) composed of 8 high-level Ministry officials. Among its principal aims is that of "putting into practice the decisions of the Mexico Declaration" and carrying out activities in relation to the "three basic objectives of the Major Project as laid down in the Quito Declaration".

EL SALVADOR

The main activities associated with the Major Project have been incorporated in the National Cultural and Educational Development Plan for the period 1983-2000. The first activities have been dedicated to the reinforcement of regionalization and district consolidation of educational services.

In accordance with the findings of the stage of diagnosis the three objectives of the Major Project have been incorporated in the section of the Plan dealing with the "Objectives of the National Plan".

With regard to the objective of ensuring the formal education of all school-age children and offering them a minimum education period of 8 to 10 years, projects are in hand to give initial integral attention to children from 0 to 6 years of age and extend the coverage of early childhood education to children in the 4 to 6 year old group.

In respect of basic education, in addition to enlarging and building premises with the necessary furniture and equipment to attend to a larger number of children, steps are for example being taken to reduce drop-out and grade repetition rates, institute out-of-school education methods, provide study texts, and achieve better utilization of community resources in the education process and in the construction of school premises.

With reference to the second Major Project objective, the corresponding activities are being carried out preferentially in rural areas since these show the highest illiteracy percentage rates in the case of both sexes. It is also intended to promote educational continuity on a life long basis in the case of people recently taught to read and write, expand basic adult education services, and inculcate skills and train for work through a process of inter-ministerial co-ordination already in operation. At the same time programmes will be carried out to provide family guidance, promote the appropriate use of free time and support community organization.

In fulfilment of the objective of improving the quality of the system, psycho-pedagogical guidance services have been established at the school nuclei, parents' schools have been brought into operation, technical assistance services to teachers continue to be provided by supervisory units on a constant basis, and the periodical staff-training evaluation plan remains operative in collaboration with the Education Directorate of the Ministry. A revision of the present system of recruitment, selection and training of technical and administrative personnel is also under consideration.

In the planning, execution and evaluation of the activities prescribed in the National Plan of Action, use is made of the present regional service structure. A planning unit exists in each of the three regions and acts as a link between the senior agencies of the Ministry of Education (the Planning and Organization Office, Education Directorates, etc.) and the local organisms (school nuclei).

GRENADA

Among the efforts associated with the Major Project objectives the country is interested in maintaining the high level of coverage at all educational levels and ensuring its continuation. Some measures have gradually been introduced in this respect to improve the rates of student retention and promotion. The programme reconstruction of school premises also remains valid.

The Literacy and Adult Education Programmes are concentrated in the National Literacy Campaign which is conducted by the Centre for Popular Education (CPE) and the second stage of which began in mid-1982. The main objectives adopted for this stage are to raise the cultural level of the population in general, provide primary education for adults within a two-

year period and educate in favour of community participation.

The primary education course for adults is supplemented by post-literacy and life long literacy classes conducted by volunteer teachers.

Within the framework of the Major Project the qualitative aspects of educational development are emphasized. In this connection particular interest is being shown in applying innovations tending to introduce improvements. Interest is also being shown in adapting the system to the requirements and needs of the national community. With this in mind consideration is being given to bringing into operation specific activities designed to achieve a closer relationship between education and work.

Another significant focus of concern is the education and training of teachers.

In order to reinforce these and other activities associated with the Major Project the service's administrative units are providing significant support, in particular that responsible for educational planning.

GUATEMALA

As part of the execution of educational policies in compliance with the medium-term plan (1983-1986), and in conformity with the three objectives of the Major Project, the development of various projects has been envisaged, some of which are being studied to determine their viability, others are in execution under exploratory conditions, some are undergoing negotiation with external financing sources, and still others are in process of implementation. Among these latter is the "Desarrollo de la Educación Primaria Rural (PRODEPRIR)" project, the purpose of which is to expand and renovate rural primary education services in nine departments. Its basic aims are the building and equipping of schools, teacher training and the development of a regionalized curriculum using out-of-school methods in coordination with integrated rural development projects.

This project is supplemented by consideration of a new approach in regard to teacher education, administrative reorganization, the granting of scholarships, and the production of instructional materials.

Another project, concerned with bilingual education, aims to improve the education of monolingual Mayan children at the preprimary and primary levels (in the latter instance grades 1 and 2 only) by means of staff training and the design of specific study programmes including the appropriate material and methodologies.

The project covers the four largest Mayan groups: Quiché (department of El Quiché), Cakchiquel (Chimaltenango), Mam (Huehuetenango) and Kekchi (Alta Verapaz). Ten schools entrusted with expanding the use of the Spanish language are in operation in each of these linguistic areas. It is intended in future to generalize the application of this experience and institutionalize bilingual and bicultural education.

In connection with the second objective of the Major Project, other national projects in execution are: "Alfabetización, dentro del programa regular de la Dirección de Adultos (DAEA)"; and "Apoyo a la Expansión, Dotación y Mejoramiento de la Educación Extraescolar (PAEDOMEX)". Their purposes are to give attention to people in the age range 14 to 45 in the poorer sectors of three departments, utilizing appropriate technology (radio broadcasting and other means of mass communication) in order to develop a basic curriculum as an essential condition to commence and improve the advancement of human resources in the geographic areas mentioned.

Also in process of execution is the Out-of-School Education Project entrusted to the Community Development Unit. Its area of application comprises four municipal districts in two of the country's central departments. Its objectives are the building of school workshops and the development of handicraft education and training programmes.

A further project is that concerned with Sport and Recreation. This is devoted to the promotion, dissemination and practice of all forms of sport throughout the country and the development of recreational activities.

Finally, the "Programa Nacional de los Núcleos Familiares para el Desarrollo (NUFED)" is in full operation and aims to determine new options for the education of young people in rural areas who fail to complete their primary education due to lack of opportunity.

HAITI

The objectives of the Major Project are identifiable with the general educational objectives as defined in the Five-Year Plan for the period 1981-1986. The national strategy to fulfil these objectives is based on four lines of action: a) a balanced and decentralized distribution of the school system; b) the promotion of regional and local incentives; c) association of the school with the process of economic and social development; and d) the institutional reinforcement and administrative rationalization of the education system.

The extension of coverage among pre-school children is expected to add 5,000 students annually to the system.

Insofar as primary schooling is concerned, it is estimated that the number of pupils in rural and urban schools in the 1982-1983 academic year will amount to 716,000, representing an increase of 8.8% over the preceding year. For the school year 1983-1984 a further increase of 9.5% is expected over the previous period. The system will thus be attending to 784,000 students (42.5% in urban and 57.5% in rural schools) distributed over 3,940 public and private primary schools served by 17,540 teachers. The school attendance rate throughout the country would thus reach a level of 49.3%.

As to the plan to extend out-of-school activities in the year 1983-1984 with a view to attending to a total of 160,000 persons requiring literacy teaching, it is estimated that 4,000 centres and 200 promoters will be engaged in these duties. The target of the five-year plan is to reduce the present level of illiteracy by 30%. The greatest effort will be devoted to erradicating illiteracy at its source, namely by endeavouring to reach an overall school-attendance rate of 100% by the year 2000.

In pursuit of the objective of improving the quality and efficiency of the system, administrative and technical cadres are being formed with a view to applying new study programmes in basic and secondary schools. Attention is also being given to reinforcing institutional arrangements, extending decentralization and establishing a national system of professional and technical training.

HONDURAS

With a view to fulfilling the first objective of the Major Project various plans aiming to increase school coverage and improve student retention and promotion rates are in progress.

As a result of the school-building plan, which is financed by national and foreign resources (World Bank and AID) and is receiving active community participation, an average of more than three classrooms are being built per working day. These educational centres are at the same time being furnished and provided with the necessary study texts, libraries, teaching materials and kitchen equipment. To safeguard the proper use and care of premises, equipment and materials, a parallel training plan is in progress for teachers, students, community leaders and members of the community in general.

In order to raise the level of student retention and attend to the safeguarding of their health, a study is in progress to make a thorough evaluation of the situation and take decisions at an early date with regard to the necessary quantity and quality of light meals (school lunches) to be served at the schools.

In 1982 the National Government, acting in conjunction with UNICEF, initiated a project, which continues in operation, to supply teaching materials, children's libraries and materials to 95 nursery schools in frontier areas and train the corresponding staff.

With reference to the second Major Project objective, which aims to reduce illiteracy rates and develop and expand adult education services, a National Literacy Plan was set in motion in July 1983 for the period 1983-1986. This is to be applied progressively until all five regions into which the country has been subdivided are covered.

Literacy teaching will commence in the zone consisting of the departments of Intibucá, Lempira and La Paz. Subsequently, in 1984, attention will be given to the zone comprising Santa Bárbara, Ocotepeque and Copán and, finally in 1985, the plan will be extended to Choluteca and Valle. It is hoped to achieve a reduction of 25% in the national illiteracy rate by the end of 1985.

The plan includes components relating to health, culture, education, natural resources, technology, etc., and will be applied in three main stages, namely literacy proper, post-literacy and consolidation.

With regard to the third objective, a teacher improvement programme —"Programa de Ac-

tualización del Magisterio"— is to be carried out. In addition to teacher training it will include the test application of new curriculum approaches aiming to improve the quality of the process and reduce school reproval and drop-out rates. Training will start with supervisors and continue with directors and teachers following a coherent plan. The curriculum innovation test will commence in a given zone and follow the principle of consolidation of schools.

MEXICO

The section dealing with education in the 1983-1988 National Development Plan includes in well-defined terms the objectives and target population groups of the Major Project.

The primary aim of the education sector is to "ensure access to basic education to all those who seek it".

At the pre-school level, approximately 50% of the children in the 5-year-old group are receiving attention. To achieve this result, in addition to expanding coverage in rural areas, programmes have been instituted in rural and native bilingual communities and entrusted to young members of the community after a one-year training period. 140,000 5-year-old native children have received attention in the period 1982 to 1983.

Primary education is imparted to children between the ages of 6 and 14 in accordance with a 6-year study plan. Attention has been given in the year 1982-1983 to 98% of the applicant population.

Several support programmes have been in operation since 1981-1982 in localities where education services were either non-existent or incomplete. Transportation to and from school is provided, as well as scholarships and boarding facilities (which include lodging, food and out-of-school instruction for more than 9,000 children in 2,214 localities). In addition, the "community instructor with nutritional support" programme, which includes larders (food stores) in 15,000 localities lacking in resources, has been of benefit to 232,000 students in the academic year 1982-1983.

Under the Spanish language promotion programme, which is bilingual and bicultural, attention is being given in the 1982-1983 period to 413,000 native children between 6 and 14 years of age. Children of poor families have the option of lodging in school hostels, of which there are more than 1,200 throughout the country.

As regards special education, total enrolment in the academic year 1982-1983 reached a level of 129,000 students out of an estimated demand potential of 1,960,000 cases of maladjustment —slight, serious, temporary or permanent.

With regard to the second objective of the Major Project, the country has set up —within the framework of an extensive programme— training centres for native women. These centres are provided with cultural, social and productive elements for the suitable development of those attending. 41 such centres giving attention to 2,000 women and 600 children are in operation.

A number of services has been concerned with adult education. Currently engaged in this field is the "Instituto Nacional para la Educación de Adultos (INEA)" set up in August 1981.

A television programme has been in operation since January 1982 with the aim of diversifying and/or supplementing the literacy activities.

The education sector also provides schooling services, open systems and special services for basic adult education. Although some of these have failed to reach the targets adopted for the present year, they have succeeded in establishing a level that will make it possible in the near future to expand and diversify the coverage so far achieved.

It is estimated that INEA, by means of the national literacy programme "Programa Nacional de Alfabetización — (PRONALE)" the level of illiteracy will have been considerably reduced by the end of the 1982-1983 period.

As a means of improving the quality of education it is still intended to reformulate the teacher college study plan in the near future. Until such time as this amendment comes into effect several projects are in hand, relating to the qualitative improvement of the teaching function; the training of teachers attending to two or more grades; the supply of teaching material for the integrated first and second-grade programmes; the supply of "primary audio" teaching packages with recorded lessons for grades 4 to 6 to enable the teacher to devote more time to the lower grades.

As part of the project devoted to improving the efficiency of the system the following special programmes also deserve mention: primary education for migrant children, i.e. children of farm workers who move from place to place in the harvest season; retrieval of children who have fallen behind in their studies by assisting parents and providing special material support; attention to children with slight learning problems; and the programme of intensive primary education for working children (of 2.1/2 years duration but equivalent to the regular 6-year system).

For its part the "Centro Regional de Educación de Adultos y Alfabetización Funcional para América Latina – CREFAL"– in fulfilment of the will to co-operate with the countries and regional organisms engaged in Plans of Action as prescribed in the Major Project, has provided various advisory services to national literacy programmes in 1983 and co-operated in seminars and workshops on specific aspects such as methodologies, strategies and evaluation.

MONTSERRAT

The principal efforts of the Government are being devoted to the qualitative improvement of the system. The work of teachers is being reinforced by the provision of aids for the teaching-learning process (libraries, laboratories and workshops), together with more advisory support for supervisors and the fostering of improvement activities by means of conferences, seminars, workshops, etc.

Action is being taken at the same time in other directions: study-programme innovations, improvement in the teaching of sciences and strengthening of the relationship between education and work.

In the field of adult education priority is allocated to the outlying peasant population. Out-of-school adult education programmes linked with working activities are under the supervision of the Community Services of the Ministry of Education, Health and Community Services.

NICARAGUA

The definition of aims, objectives and principles of national education stemmed from a wide process of consultation involving some 50,000 persons representative of all sectors and is consistent with the objectives of the Major Project. Based on the aims proposed, new general education objectives were drawn up to cover all relevant forms, levels and courses of action, the corresponding activities being channelled in three directions: service expansion, qualitative improvement, and educational reform.

With regard to the Major Project objectives it is of interest to record that the 1983 Budget for the Education Sector represents approximately 5% of the country's Gross Domestic Product and 11.5% of the Government expenditure budget.

The coverage of pre-school education is estimated in 1983 to include 61,500 children –an increase of 43% over the preceding year. In the application of some specific lines of action use is being made of human resources living in the communities concerned ("Centros de Extensión Preescolar No Escolarizada – CEPNE"), communal pre-school courses in rural areas, and Popular Pre-school Centres in agricultural co-operative settlements and markets.

Special education for mentally handicapped children is imparted at 25 schools distributed throughout the country.

The primary school attendance rate in 1983 stands at 80%.

With the aim of strengthening the National Literacy Crusade, a Popular Adult Basic Education scheme has been launched and is expected to ensure continuation of the considerable literacy efforts hitherto made. At the present time five Life Long Literacy levels are in action in addition to an introductory level with an enrolment of 161,000 persons. A programme has at the same time been instituted for the cultural supervision of 8,000 local instructors, most of whom are workers, farm labourers or housewives.

To the normal Adult Education services have been added others involving a considerable degree of organized popular participation. Such is the case of the building of rural community schools, the consolidation of schools and the community development programme, "Programa de Desarrollo Comunal – PRODECO".

Insofar as improvements in the quality and efficacy of the system are concerned, a feature

that deserves mention is the fact that 13 teacher colleges are in operation in 1983 and that the Rural Social Service in which Grade 6 students and graduate teachers take part continues in force.

Other projects and programmes in process of execution include: "Elaboración y Reproducción de Materiales Educativos – PERME", relating to the production of teaching aids and which provides primary-grade students with instructional pamphlets to reinforce the teaching of Natural Sciences and agricultural work; workshops defined as "Talleres de Evaluación, Programación y Capacitación Educativa – TEPCE", which meet on the last Friday of each two-month period to draw up technical documents and promote the self-instruction process; the School Consolidation scheme which has been adopted as a political and educational strategy to foster integrated rural development; the ten education-cum-work schools, "Escuelas Rurales de Educación-Trabajo – ERET", which aim to further the technical agricultural capability of students in grades 5 to 9; and the rural agricultural schools, "Escuelas Agropecuarias Campesinas", which offer training to young adults by applying a special accelerated primary education plan up to grade 6.

PANAMA

In accordance with the objective of achieving the schooling of the greatest possible number of children, preprimary education is being progressively expanded for students in the 4 to 5 age group making use of formal and out-of-school methods, especially in disadvantaged city districts and rural areas having an indigenous population. Participating in this effort are the communities themselves together with private and public-sector institutions which provide significant inter-institutional technical support.

With reference to primary education, although the schooling percentage is high (over 96%), emphasis is being given to the extension of coverage in fringe urban districts and isolated rural areas. Efforts are at the same time being made to improve student-retention rates.

With regard to the objective relating to illiteracy and adult education, the National Literacy Programme in charge of the Ministry of Education continues in operation and work is at the same time being carried out on some factors that tend to encourage the maintenance of a comparatively high illiteracy rate. These include extreme poverty, idiomatic barriers with the native population, population dispersal in some rural zones, etc.

One of the programmes of greatest interest is that relating to the completion of primary studies – "Terminación de Estudios Primarios (TEP)". This applies to adults who are thereby able to obtain in three years the final certificate relating to their primary studies. Another programme, concerned with Popular Culture, is devoted to the training of adults in given occupations or professions.

With the aim of improving quality levels, study plans and programmes are being adapted to ensure their consistency with the interests and needs of the community and the constant progress of scientific and technological development. These include the continuing programmes for the improvement of the teaching of sciences; the training of teaching, administrative and technical personnel; and educational research. New methodological approaches are under consideration for the various levels and lines of action of the system, and the production of texts and school materials continues.

PARAGUAY

Within the National Plan of Action, and in fulfilment of the first objective of the Major Project, the frontier and colonization regions have been chosen as areas meriting primary attention. A gradual process of completion of rural schools not as yet providing all grades is under way in such regions. This programme additionally involves teacher training, the building and equipping of schools, and co-ordination with the other sectoral projects.

At the same time the extension of bilingual instruction continues throughout the country. This was begun in 1977 with a pilot project concerned with determining "the effectiveness of utilization of the audio-lingual method in the teaching of Spanish as a second language". This plan makes exclusive use of the Guaraní language for oral purposes while introducing Spanish as a second language.

Several programmes are in progress with the aim of abolishing illiteracy and developing adult services. These comprise on the one hand the

establishment of an Education Department in the Municipal Corporation of Asunción which offers literacy and adult education courses to its workers. On the other hand, in the context of attending to priority population groups, a literacy campaign for natives is in progress in the Paraguayan Chaco area using the local mother tongue (Guarani-Tupi) as the language of instruction. This programme is under the control of the Guarani Language and Culture Division of the Ministry of Education and will shortly be backed up by the printing of 2,000 copies of the "Cartilla Guaraní" leaflet.

Also continuing in operation are the 340 Adult Education Centres which attend to 17,000 students, and the Out-of-School Adult Education Centre in the locality of "Benjamín Aceval" in the Paraguayan Chaco. This establishment represented the bringing into service by the Ministry of Education of the first integrated education-for-development project. In its experimental stage this project was based on a survey carried out to ascertain the basic needs of the population. Using these as a basis, job training programmes were instituted in coordination with the occupational promotion service —"Servicio Nacional de Promoción Profesional (SNPP)"— the Armed Forces, and the "Centro de Médicos Colorados y Aceros Paraguayos (ACEPAR)", a local industrial establishment prepared to employ qualified workers completing the programme. Family Education courses are at the same time being organized for the feminine population.

The Adult Education Centre keeps up and sees to the improvement of basic formal education programmes for those wishing to complete their studies up to the third secondary grade.

Insofar as quality is concerned, the National Plan of Action is carrying out an extensive teacher training and professional qualification programme. It also undertakes the distribution of text books and of instructional materials and concerns itself with the improvement of educational administration.

PERU

The current National Plan of Action gives expression, within the framework of the Major Project objectives, to the manner in which the country has responded to the complex range of national educational requirements.

One of the first activities undertaken to bring the plan into operation was to draw up a National Register of Programmes and Projects. This was entrusted to organizations of a private, public or joint character associated with the education sector and judged to be significant in the task of achieving the Major Project objectives. The plan will be intensively utilized during its period of application (1983-1986).

The classification of programmes and projects in accordance with the Project objectives, and bearing in mind those which each aims to fulfil shows that of the total of 98 programmes and projects, 10 are related to Objective 1, 26 to Objective 2, and 62 to Objective 3.

Examination of the degree of attention being given to each of the priority sectors proposed at the Quito Meeting reveals that most of the projects are concerned with the sectors affected by critical poverty (30.1%), native populations (22.9%), illiterates (10.5%), migrants (5.2%), the young unemployed (3.3%) and handicapped or retarded students (2%), though several apply to more than one specific group.

Public institutions are responsible for the major part (i. e. 93) of the projects and programmes, private intitutions being entrusted with the remaining five projects.

By means of the programmes and projects relating to the first objective of the Major Project it is intended on the one hand to reinforce the activities currently being carried out and expand the coverage of non-formal initial education, and on the other to improve and amplify the educational infrastructure and attention being given to children at the first level of the system. Several projects aim to deal with these aspects, including those defined as Integral Attention to the Child and his Family in the Newer Sectors of the Southern Cone of Lima; Implementation of the Educational Infrastructure for Rural and Underprivileged Urban Areas; and Promotion of and Support for Initial Education Centres.

In connection with the second Major Project objective, the National Multisectoral Literacy Plan warrants particular mention, as does the concern of various institutions in the application of out-of-school forms of education which enable broader attention to be given to the illiterate sector of the population. Some of the programmes in this group are defined as The

Open Classroom, Preparation for Life, Work Education, Application of Distance Education Systems for Rural Areas in the South-Central Hill Region, and Training of Promoters for Community Development.

A Literacy and Non-Formal Development Project by Audio-Visual Means (UNDP-Unesco Project PER 81/005), which conforms to the general aims of this Plan has been set in motion and is contributing to it by bringing into service a network of mobile units for the promotion of audio-visual education, training of literacy instructors and technical personnel responsible for its implementation, and by producing audio-visual materials in support of the national literacy efforts.

Most of the National Plan programmes and projects are concerned with the third Major Project objective. Among other matters, needs and problems they refer to: the renovation of contents and methods; instructional materials for the primary and secondary education levels; teacher training and improvement; and raising the professional status of non-graduate teaching staff. The following programmes are some of those envisaged in this context: Evaluation of the Curriculum Structure for Basic Initial Education; Expansion of the School Library Network; Improvement of the Teaching of Sciences in the Formal and Non-Formal Systems; Training of Bilingual Teachers, and Establishment of the Educational Supervision System, etc.

A national Major Project programming workshop —"Taller Nacional para la Programación de Actividades del Plan Nacional de Acción 1983-1986 en Apoyo del Proyecto Principal de Educación en América Latina y el Caribe"— organized by the Ministry of Education with the technical and financial support of OREALC and SECAB was held from 24 to 28 October 1983. According to the national authorities the meeting appeared to have led to "fruitful results, which promise to be of great value in implementing the Major Education Project" in Perú.

ST. KITTS-NEVIS

The Plan of Action, insofar as it relates to the first objective of the Major Project, includes the expansion of preschool education, the building and equipping of schools for preprimary and basic education, and improvement in the levels of education imparted to handicapped or retarded children.

In connection with the second objective the activities undertaken are founded on a concept of lifelong education rather than on the teaching of literacy and are directed in the main to the occupational field.

As regards qualitative innovations, several measures are being considered for implementation in the education system, namely: teacher training for the preschool level, the preparation of teaching aids (guides for teachers and texts for students), general teacher training and improvement, and review of the curriculum.

ST. LUCIA

In connection with the first objective of the Major Project, the Government is proceeding with the programme of school reconstruction, rehabilitation and expansion.

It is present policy to devote primary attention to students already in the system with a view to improving retention rates. A school food programme has been introduced for this purpose, campaigns have been set in motion to persuade parents to send their children to school, and scholarships have been awarded.

At the same time special attention has been devoted to those school districts most affected by dropping-out and absenteeism; close links have been established between education and rural development programmes to ensure that the poorer segment of the population receives the necessary assistance and benefit from the facilities afforded by the education system.

With regard to the second objective, the Government is determined to eradicate illiteracy through the medium of the National Literacy Programme, the aim of which is to make the basic level available to all persons of 15 or more years of age, functional literacy for the 15 to 45 age group being the main component of this programme. Adult education services are also being extended, and the policy continues in force to use creole for literacy instruction at all centres, thus making it necessary to conduct workshops for teacher training purposes.

With reference to the quality of education, on the job teacher training programmes have been reinforced, as have the Curriculum and Material Development Units (CAMDU) and the Education Planning service.

TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

In the general context of educational planning several activities consistent with those recommended in the Major Project activities are in progress. Among the more important mention may be made of the drawing up of methodological guidelines for the school mapping process which seeks to rationalize the use of existing resources with a view to making education universal and achieving quality improvement throughout the country. A document of significant value has been the publication of the National School Directorate. This contains a list of the co-ordinates of the location of each school, thereby facilitating educational tasks in a co-ordinated manner. In addition, a description has been drawn up of the Teacher Improvement Programme based on competition, for use in the in-service training of the country's teachers.

Furthermore, programmes continuing in operation include those for primary education teachers in relation to the teaching of reading and mathematics and the special programmes for students with reading or language problems.

URUGUAY

In order to ensure the organic integration of educational activities with the Major Project, a project for Continuing Technical Advisory Services in the National Education system has been planned with the following objectives: a) to attend to the requirements in all grades and specializations; b) the formation of teams of specialists in educational research, basic scientific research, and educational technology, and c) lasting assistance in the training and improvement of the country's teachers.

As an average in 1983 one school is available for every 1,500 inhabitants. Some imbalances still exist in the basic secondary grades 7, 8 and 9 between rural and urban zones. Steps are however being taken to resolve this anomaly in the near future.

The country-wide illiteracy rate in 95% and the average school attendance level of the adult population is equivalent to 6.7 years. (Compulsory general education was only raised to 9 years as from 1976). The coverage of the 6-grade primary education phase amounts to 89%.

Drop-out rates are slightly above 1%. On the other hand grade repetition rates amount to 13.4% in the country as a whole.

The present intention is to intensify the efforts to generalize the attendance at school of 5-year-old children.

Children requiring special treatment are attended to at psychic recuperation and open air schools, schools for the blind applying phono-audiological techniques, and others.

In fulfilment of the second objective of the Major Project, social and educational activities are being programmed in order that young people and adults in a condition of risk may be suitably prepared before undertaking remunerated employment. Technical assistance will at the same time be given to teachers working in disadvantaged areas (post-literacy instruction, incorporation in the labour market, adult education, etc.). Simultaneously the National Literacy Plan continues in operation and has the support of the social communications media.

With regard to improvements in the quality and efficiency of the system, the plan seeks to reach these aims through the means of teacher training at all levels and specialities (improvement courses and seminars, and permanent workshops).

VENEZUELA

The Sixth Education Sector Development Plan, for the period 1981-1985, establishes five fundamental objectives as guidelines for action in the education field. All are concordant with the objectives of the Major Project.

As laid down in the Plan, priority is being given to programmes for disadvantaged population groups such as those in underprivileged rural areas, frontier zones, indigenous communities, the illiterate adult sector and persons in need of special education.

As to the expansion of educational coverage, it is estimated that enrolment at the pre-school level in 1983 in public and private establishments will be more than 9% higher than in the preceding year. In basic education the growth rate for the year will amount to approximately 4%, and to 6% in the case of the secondary diversified education phase compared with 1982.

It is also hoped to expand education services for adults and carry out a revision of programmes, with emphasis on out-of-school education. Adult enrolment at the primary level is estimated to increase in 1983 by approximately 13% and by 2.5% in the diversified phase.

A Meeting to Discuss the National Literacy Programme was held at Caracas in March 1983 for the purpose of evaluating and determining new strategies. Recommendations of interest were put forward and were published in the Supplementary Bulletin for September 1983 published by the National Literacy Commission.

The sectoral plan establishes the qualitative improvement of education as one of its priority aims. To this end it proposes to develop curriculum innovations, educational researches, new methodologies, a review of study plans and programmes, activities to improve the teaching of sciences, and the incorporation of up to date technologies in formal and out of school education.

MINISTERS AGREE TO SUPPORT THE MAJOR PROJECT

Since the Meeting of the Interim Intergovernmental Regional Committee for the Major Project held in St. Lucia in 1982, the countries have continued to reiterate their support of the objectives and activities of the Project at the political level. On the occasion of sub-regional and regional meetings interest has repeatedly been expressed and agreements reached that demonstrate a decisive endorsement of the Project and wish to ensure its success.

Reference is made hereunder to three Meetings of Ministers of Education held during 1983 at which significant resolutions were adopted in connection with the Major Project.

The "Andrés Bello" Convention

Bearing in mind the co-operation agreement with Unesco in force since 1976 the Meeting of Ministers of Education in 1982 held in La Paz, Bolivia, offered the services of the Permanent Executive Secretariat of the "Andrés Bello" Convention as a sub-regional mechanism to support the activities of the Major Project in the Field of Education.

The Twelfth Meeting of Ministers of Education held in April 1983 in Santiago, Chile, decided, as expressed in Resolution Nº 6: "To initiate and continue during 1983, in co-operation with Unesco, projects and activities in support of the Major Project in the Field of Education".

In fulfilment of this Resolution the Operational Plan of the "Andrés Bello" Convention laid down a programme of various activities for 1983, including: National Programming Workshops for the First Phase of Execution of the Major Project; preparation of an inventory of the potential of educational industries; publications; special education activities, etc.

V Spanish American Congress on Education

This Congress, jointly convened by the Spanish American Education Office (OEI) and the Peruvian Ministry of Education was attended by delegations from 18 countries of the region, 12 of which were led by Ministers or Vice-Ministers of Education. The event took place in Lima, Perú, in the month of September.

During the meeting, several proposals closely connected with the objectives of the Major Project were confirmed, prominent among which were: the eradication of illiteracy, the expansion of educational coverage with a view to overcoming present imbalances; the improvement of educational quality; co-operation of the community in education, and orientation of the latter towards scientific and technological modernization. The OEI also ratified the collaboration of Unesco in the Major Project as a means of favouring inter-institutional co-operation in benefit of its Member States.

XIV Ordinary Meeting of CIECC

The XIV Ordinary Meeting of the Inter-American Council for Education, Science and Culture was held in Kingston, Jamaica, from 19 to 23 September 1983. In the debates held on this occasion repeated references were made to the Major Project in the Field of Education in the Latin American and Caribbean Region and the Secretariat of the Organization of American States (OAS) was requested, in the framework of the Programme of Activities adopted by the XIV Meeting of CIECC and the Programme and Budget approved by the XXII General Conference of Unesco, to continue its understandings with the Unesco Secretariat with a view to defining co-operative activities between the two Organizations in support of the efforts of the Member States of the region devoted to achieving the objectives of the Major Project.

REGIONAL AND SUB-REGIONAL TECHNICAL MEETINGS

A number of specialized meetings on matters and problems related directly to the objectives of the Major Project were held in the course of 1983. The resulting conclusions and suggestions will undoubtedly give valuable support to the activities of the countries concerned.

1. **International Seminar on Physical Education and Sport as factors in the quality of Education**, Havana, 21-24 February

This Seminar was convened by OREALC and sponsored by the "Instituto Nacional de Deportes, Educación Física y Recreación (INDER)" of the Republic of Cuba. Specialists from various countries of the region took part together with a substantial delegation on behalf of the host country. The fundamental purpose of the event was to examine possibilities of improvement in the quality of education from the standpoint of Physical Education and Sporting Activities based on the principles specified in the Unesco International Charter on Physical Education and Sport.

Discussions took place following a basic reference document and were enhanced by the submission of 6 papers by Cuban specialists and 9 by foreign participants.

The Seminar also provided an opportunity to hold a round-table meeting to discuss the central theme of the event. This discussion gave rise to a fertile exchange of opinions among those participating and enabled an examination to be made of the recommendations of the Seminar and approval of a Plan of Action for the development of Physical Education and Sport in Latin America and the Caribbean. This plan was submitted by the participants at the Seminar for transmission to Unesco, the appropriate authorities in the countries of the region, and to specialized institutions.

2. **Regional Meeting of Secretaries and Representatives of National Commissions of Unesco in Latin America**, Buenos Aires, 18-21 April

This Regional Meeting was held in fulfilment of a recommendation adopted at the VII Regional Conference of National Commissions of Unesco and was attended by representatives of 21 countries, as well as from the Headquarters of Unesco and the Regional Offices in Montevideo and Santiago.

The Major Project in the Field of Education in the Latin American and Caribbean Region was discussed as part of the Agenda. In this respect the Secretaries and Representatives approved Recommendation Nº 5, thereby reiterating the request made to the Director General of Unesco to support the Major Project, and requested the General Secretariat to prepare and present to the Member States an intersectoral plan outlining the activities which the Organization will be carrying out in support of the Major Project.

3. **Sub-regional Educational Planning and Administration Workshop**, St. Lucia, 18-22 April

This Seminar, which was attended by 15 countries, was organized jointly by Unesco, CARNEID, the Caribbean University/USAID Primary Education Project and the St. Lucia National Commission.

In the first phase of the Seminar discussions were held on topics concerning: the relationship between educational planning and development models; planning techniques; the preparation of work plans for the Major Project, etc.

4. **Sub-regional Workshop on School Buildings**, St. Lucia, 18-22 April

This meeting was organized by OREALC together with the Unesco Office in Kingston, Jamaica, and with the advisory services of a consultant architect. The event was in the nature of a follow-up of the workshop held in St. Lucia in 1981. Discussions were centred on the construction of school buildings and educational equipment and on an examination of endogenous building materials.

5. **Sub-regional Workshops on Adult Education and Literacy**, Antigua, 6-10 June

This meeting was organized jointly by the Unesco Office in Kingston and the Caribbean Council for Adult Education (CANCAE), with the sponsorship of OREALC. Its main objectives were: to renovate and bring up to date the activities relating to adult education and literacy in the National Plans of Action of the Major Project; to promote an exchange of information and documentation between countries in connection with adult education and literacy; and to provide information, advisory assistance and documentation in order to assist the countries in initiating and reinforcing programmes in this field.

6. **Central American Meeting of those Responsible for the Major Project in the Field of Education**, San José, Costa Rica, 15-17 June

This meeting was organized by OREALC through the medium of the Unesco Sub-Regional Education Office for Central America and Panama. It was supported by the Ministry of Education of Costa Rica and the educational co-ordination service "Coordinación Educativa y Cultural Centroamericana (CECC)".

The aims of the meeting were to exchange information on the execution of National Plans of Action in the sub-regional countries; to examine a methodological proposal for the programming of the first phase of execution of the Plan; and to organize horizontal co-operation and formulate suggestions for holding national programming workshops.

The participants noted the existence of a number of coincidences between the sub-regional countries in regard to problems faced and efforts made in the planning stage.

It was judged advisable in this respect to adopt a mode of procedure favouring communication and co-operation among the countries and the promotion of governmental and non-governmental co-operative activities related to the objectives of the Major Project.

With regard to the methodology proposed by Unesco for the first phase of execution, the advisability of making use of it was stressed in view of its applicability in all the countries concerned and the fact that it enables the monitoring of progress in the activities undertaken and their evaluation. In support of its application it was thought essential to consider aspects in respect of organization and participation.

An analysis was also made of the strategy to be applied in carrying out national workshops and the Regional Plan of Action.

7. **Sub-Regional Workshop on Family Health and Education**, Barbados, 20-24 June

This event was organized jointly by the Panamerican Health Office, USAID, the Unesco Office in Kingston, and OREALC. Among others, its aims were to arouse awareness among teacher educators of the need to incorporate these matters in the study programmes of training institutions; to integrate family health and education aspects within the teaching-learning process; to produce modules; to identify persons with a "multiplying" capacity, etc.

8. Regional Unesco/UNICEF Meeting, Mexico, 30 June to 3 July

This combined meeting of UNICEF and Unesco representatives in Latin America and the Caribbean had as its purpose to review the state of co-operation between the two organisms in the region and to explore the possibility of reinforcing new projects.

It was considered that conditions for these purposes are excellent since UNICEF is providing assistance in several countries and Unesco is participating actively in the development of the Major Education Project, the objectives of which coincide in many respects with the activities of the Fund.

It was announced that UNICEF had approved in May 1983 a Programme of Co-operation designed to promote the generalization of Primary and Literacy Education.

The meeting also served to review projects in progress and discuss possible strategies and mechanisms of co-operation within the framework of the Major Project, regarding which UNICEF expressed the greatest interest.

Possible lines of co-operation in various countries of the region might be found feasible in connection with the stimulation of early learning; the early detection of incapability among children; the introduction of health education matters in the primary education curriculum; pre-school and primary literacy and education programmes in disadvantaged urban districts; out-of-school and low cost pre-school education; and basic services for the least favoured groups.

It is hoped that similar meetings may be held in the future.

9. Regional Technical Meeting on Inequalities faced by Young People and Women in the Field of Education in Latin America and the Caribbean, Panama, 11-15 July.

Organized by OREALC with the co-operation of the Ministry of Education of Panama. Characteristic features of this event were the high level of interest and proficiency of the participants, the substantial quality of the experiences submitted, and the spirit of responsibility and identification displayed in reaching the proposed objectives.

An examination was made of national experiences in Argentina, Brazil, Cuba, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, the Dominican Republic and Venezuela. Cases were reported of educational inequalities having been overcome at non-governmental institutions in Bolivia, Colombia, Chile, Ecuador and Peru. Other studies and papers were also submitted. In the course of the meeting some significant thoughts were put forward on the historical development of social and educational theories; the evolution of educational inequalities as between men and women over the course of time; the scope of educational inequalities among young people and women; methods of correcting these educational inequalities; the main obstacles and distorsions still remaining in the region; the Major Education Project as an instrument in the correction of educational inequalities; the participation of women in the achievement of the three basic Project objectives; and specific proposals and recommendations regarding the manner of surmounting such inequalities through formal and out-of-school educational activities.

10. Regional Technical Consultative Meeting on Adult Education in Terms of the IV International Conference on Adult Education, Havana, 5-10 September

At this Technical Consultative Meeting an analysis was made of main adult education experiences in the region. The event was attended by qualified specialists in different areas of adult education. Based on specially prepared documents summarizing the position in the region, current adult education trends were discussed and priority lines of action proposed. Concrete tasks were also suggested in connection with encouraging national debates concerning the participation of the regional countries in the light of the IV International Conference on Adult Education.

In the suggestions to be put before the countries it was proposed that consideration be given to the following elements: to set in motion a process of analysis or evaluation of adult education in each country with the participation of governmental and non-governmental entities; to consider in the debates the dissemination and analysis of the National Plan of Action adopted in accordance with the Major Project in-

sofar as the second of its objectives is concerned; and to bear in mind that sub-regional meetings are to be held in 1984 as well as a final regional meeting at which the results of the national debates would be made known.

11. Latin American Seminar on the Evaluation of Adult Education Programmes, Rio de Janeiro, 22-30 September

The Brazilian Literacy Movement foundation (MOBRAL), with the financial assistance of Unesco and the technical assistance of OREALC organized a Latin American Seminar on the Evaluation of Adult Education Programmes which was attended by 150 specialists from Brazil, the Region, and Portuguese-speaking African countries.

Its purposes were: to carry out a diagnosis of the present state of the evaluation process in Latin America and in some of the African countries; identify the obstacles hindering evaluation and the application of its results in educational practice; and to formulate recommendations as to the manner of overcoming the present state of affairs in a framework of practicable new options.

The central theme of the Seminar was tackled for the first time in a continental context. This precursory nature of the meeting served additionally to throw into perspective the need for complementation and the affinities of the Brazilian experiences with those of the other countries of the region. Information regarding three experiences in Portuguese-speaking African countries (São Tomé & Príncipe, Mozambique and Guinea Bissau) as well as experience in Kenya proved stimulating and enabled an overall view to be obtained.

The results of the Seminar are to be made known in Spanish and Portuguese by means of a book summarizing the papers presented and discussions held.

12. Regional Seminar-Workshop on the Training of Specialists in Teacher Education with Emphasis on Integration between Educational and Productive Work, San José, Costa Rica, 19-30 September

This Seminar was organized by OREALC and the Higher Education Division of Unesco with the co-operation of the Ministry of Education of Costa Rica. It was attended by 25 participants from the countries of the Region and constituted an event designed to contribute to the promotion of activities enabling the attainment of the third objective of the Major Project in the direction —among other aspects of the concept of quality— of instilling greater effectiveness in educational action in the sphere of productive employment.

The teacher-education specialists present at the Seminar contributed —with the assistance of a "Guide" prepared for the meeting— to a better knowledge of the implications which the introduction of productive work in education may have on the knowledge, efficiency and attitudes of all educational personnel engaged in education, on the changes and innovations that should be introduced in their preparation, training and re-training and on the participation of other types of personnel (artisans, farmers, technicians, development agents, etc.) concerned with the articulation of education and work.

The intense and fruitful exchange of experiences at this meeting revealed the possibility of greater horizontal co-operation between the countries concerned.

13. Seminar on Regional Support for Popular Education and Literacy in Bolivia, La Paz, 10-18 November

Culminating the activities carried out jointly by OREALC and SENALEP as mentioned in the information relating to Bolivia, the Seminar on Regional Support for Popular Education and Literacy in Bolivia was held with the assistance of the Regional Education Office of Unesco, the Executive Secretariat of the "Andrés Bello" Convention, and the Inter-American Institute for Indigenous Affairs.

The event was attended by 12 specialists selected from eight countries of the region representing an equivalent number of national experiences.

It was also attended by 80 Bolivian representatives of popular organizations and public and private institutions connected with popular education and literacy activities. A main out-

come of the meeting was the assembly of a number of proposals and specific contributions concerning various technical, methodological and organizational areas considered in the Bolivian National Popular Education and Literacy Plan.

In order that this periodic publication may reflect in as complete and timely manner as possible the initiatives and activities carried out by each and all the countries of the region in relation to the Major Project in the Field of Education in the Latin American and Caribbean Region, pertinent official bodies are invited to send to the Unesco Regional Office for Education in Latin America and the Caribbean all information they wish to have published in this Bulletin.

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